

# Lost on the Plains.

A THRILLING NARRATIVE OF AN ACTUAL OCCURRENCE IN DAKOTA.

Written for the STANDARD.

Some years since I was sent by the Northern Pacific railroad company to explore their grant of lands, lying between the Little Missouri and Yellowstone rivers, and while on this exploration I met with an adventure, the thoughts of which even now fill my soul with an earthly dread.

At one time, I was camped on a little stream some 25 miles southwest from Sentinel Butte. This butte, situated on the divide of the Little Missouri and Yellowstone waters, rises in huge ramparts like terraces to a height of several hundred feet above the plain; a veritable sentinel indeed, overlooking its many smaller comrades and the vast plains for miles in every direction. A landmark to be remembered, once closely observed.

It was the middle of May, the days were hot and sultry, for in this region the seasons change so suddenly that but a few days intervene between the last snow storm and mid-summer weather.

One morning having some office work to do, I sent the men out with some instructions to do some field work, saying that I would be with them about noon.

By 9 o'clock I had finished, and after a lunch, mounted my horse and rode off, taking my rifle, as I wished to bring in a supply of fresh meat for our larder.

I rode some distance down the stream on which we were camped, then struck across the country to the northeast in the direction I expected to find the men. Soon the undulations of the country hid from my view the little valley I had left, then about me all sides stretched an immense rolling plain, like a sea with the billows grassed over.

The day was very warm and still, and a beautiful mirage, intensely clear and bright, had lifted Sentinel Butte above the horizon—naturally it was hidden from where I was. Like some enchanted castle it looked, suspended between the earth and sky, while a broad lake seemed to stretch beneath and around it, reflecting from its glassy surface the image of the vast and hoary pile.

I had perhaps ridden an hour, and began to think I must have passed the men, when I suddenly discovered a small band of antelope. Dismounting and fastening my horse, I looked about for some way of approaching nearer the game, but they had already seen me, and I must shoot from where I stood or not at all. I estimated the distance to be 50 yards, and adjusting my rifle for the shot, aimed at a fine buck that stood broadside to me and fired.

I heard the bullet spat against him, saw him stagger and come to his knees, but regaining his feet he bounded off after his mate and disappeared over a rise of ground, but not before I had thrown dust upon him from two other shots. I felt all the keen excitement of a hunter at the success of my first shot, for at the distance I fired, it is safe to say, not one man in a thousand can hit the size of an antelope.

I sprang into the saddle to give chase, but had hardly got seated when the horse, seemingly made wild by the smell of powder, bolted over the rocky ground and before I could gather him in, hampered as I was with the rifle, he stumbled and came to the ground with a crash. I struck on my head, but fortunately missed the stones among which we fell; the horse rolled over me, then back, and for an instant, I regain his feet, and for an instant, his whole weight lay upon me and the pommel of the saddle was pressed into the back of my neck until I thought head and body had been severed. But I was on my feet as soon as he, and caught him before he could get away. After quieting him, I poked up the rifle, examined it and the horse to see what damage had been done and said to myself, "They at least are all right, now how am I?"

So rapidly had all this passed that I had scarcely thought of myself, but now, I found my right arm was nearly useless and a strange numb feeling was stealing down the back of my neck, through my right shoulder and chest, while flashes of light passed as rapidly before my eyes as sparks from an emery wheel. Feeling faint, I looked about for some sort of shelter from the sun, but seeing none, started off, leading the horse in the direction taken by the antelope.

I fancied I would soon feel better, but had not gone far when plain, sky and all turned a purple color and my thoughts became strangely mixed and confused. It began to grow dark, or so it appeared to me, and without any fixed purpose, for strange as it may seem, I had forgotten all about the antelope or my men. I continued to wander on, seemingly urged by some power over which I had no control.

It grew darker and darker, and the bright stars came out one by one; still I went on, vaguely wondering how I came to be out on that great lonely plain, and alone. Of the past I had no recollection, beyond that time when the shadows closed me in.

I did not feel any fear, only weariness and languor, and a strong desire to lie down, and often I would try to lie down, but that strange power would not let me; I must go on. How lonely it all seemed, the plains muffled in shadows and the stars gazed silently down!

Once as I passed over a little rise of ground some light-colored object attracted my attention. I went up to it and found it was a dead antelope. I remembered it felt warm to my touch, and I fell to wondering who had killed it. It never occurred to me that I had. For some time I stood by the antelope, half expecting to see the hunter come for his game. I did not reason that this was unlikely, seeing it was night. I reasoned like one in a dream, but unlike a dream, each incident of this ghastly drama is indelibly stamped upon my brain. At last growing restless, I continued my wanderings, perhaps for miles, but once again during that long night I stood over the dead antelope and knew I had been there before. Still the hunter had not come for his game, perhaps he was somewhere near, I would shout and he might hear. But I started back in alarm at the sound of my voice, an overwhelming fear of something, I knew not what, coming over me. I hurried away from that spot shuddering with horror.

Away I went! And as I fled from that horrible and unknown sound, a thousand phantom cries followed me through the darkness, now near, and now far off, as though searching for me.

It was while thus rushing madly on that I received a shock or blow, like one who suddenly runs against an unseen wall, when all the stars in heaven seemingly blazed out in brightness, then died away, and in the pitch blackness that quickly followed, I seemed to fall an endless distance, the echo of those wailing cries still ringing in my ears. The next I remember I was sitting on a little knoll, my head resting on my hand. I had a confused idea of what had happened, and that I was now waiting for day. At times I would dash off for a little while, but would always awaken with a start and listen, like some hunted animal, for the sound of pursuit.

Once as I thus awoke, the sun shone full in my eyes. I got up and began again my aimless wanderings, not knowing where I was going, or why, only, I felt I must go on.

Not once during the long, weary hours of that day did I think of my friends, nor of my horse and rifle; I was lost, and wandering on the plains like a man in his sleep. I was very thirsty, nearly dying for water, and often I saw some clear, bright lake, but when I assayed to reach it, it would always recede before me and vanish in the distance. What with the heat, fatigue and thirst, I think I became somewhat blinded, for imagining I had found a little pool of water, I stooped eagerly down to drink, but my parched lips only touched the burning sands of the plains, and with a groan I staggered to my feet. Then about me all sides stretched an immense rolling plain, like a sea with the billows grassed over.

When consciousness returned I was standing looking earnestly at the stars that glowed like so many jets of flame in an intensely dark sky. I was seeking for something among them, but could not tell what. At last one group fixed my attention and at it I continued to gaze. I can see it now as plainly as then, the great dipper hanging low in the northern sky, but to me all directions were the same, north and south were alike unknown, and the stars, to which I instinctively turned, brought no light to my bewildered mind. They were like faces seen in a dream and in a dream are tried to be recalled; I knew them, and yet I knew them not, nor could I tell what it was I wanted of them, but it was something, I could not remember. They had a strange sort of fascination for me, for often when I felt I must go on, I would still turn and look at them in a dumb inquiring way.

I do not think I went far that night, for I seemed to be always studying the stars, but they told me nothing. At last they grew dim and faded away, and while still trying to place them, my eyes were dazzled with the rising sun, and again I wandered on.

Daylight brought no remembrance, no thought of death or danger, no past, no future, only the dim, weary present, and foremost in that, this nightmare power urged me on when I fain would have lain down to rest.

With the heat of the sun returned my burning thirst, and now, I was following some phantom lake, and now, with hand shading my eyes I stood searching the hot, misty plains for that lost something I could not recall.

On, on! Oh, the long hours of that terrible day! No rest, no water for my thirsty throat. I wonder had not died from thirst alone, for my tongue had clove to the roof of my mouth.

The sun was again nearing the plains when I became aware of a sound that seemed to be familiar, for some time it had been near and about me, but I had heard it only as we hear sounds in our sleep, faintly at first, until it forced itself upon our senses and we awake to its presence; and so it was with this, gradually it had broken upon my blunted hearing, until now, it was distinct and clear. A soft, winnowing sound, the sound of wings. Like a flash this came to me, and looking upward, I saw, circling about me, so near that I could see its dull, lead-like eyes, a large turkey buzzard.

An instinctive feeling of fear, and the premonition of some impending danger, passed over me. I stopped and looked around like one suddenly awakened in a strange place. On every hand stretched a great plain, whose undulations rolled on to the sky that touched it everywhere, save in one spot, far off, where rose the indistinct and cloud-like group of hills. I was standing beside a horse, now noticed for the first time, and at my feet lay a rifle. I looked inquiringly at the horse, then at the rifle, both were unknown to me, "and what," I thought, "am I doing out here with these strange companions in a land as unknown to me as they are?"

I tried to think how I came to be there, but could not, and a chill of unearthly horror crept over me, when I found I did not know myself!

Fancy, if you can, a man searching through the dark chambers of his clouded memory for himself.

An age, filled with nameless terrors seemed to pass before I could recall my name, with it came the remembrance of a sister living—a far eastern city, but try as I could no other person or place would come—the rest was a blank, and about me, all was unknown.

Again, that soft winnowing sound, as the buzzard passed and repassed in its slow flights. The sunlight glinted on its beak, when the creature turned its ugly head from side to side to gaze down upon me, and the dull, glittering eyes filled my soul with a wild and fearful dread.

"What did it mean, this strangeness, and that dark bird hovering over me?" Then like a thunder clap came the awful truth, I was lost, and could not remember how I became so.

Oh, God! The agony of that moment, I pray you let no man ever feel again! The icy breath of winter is warm compared to my heart when the first glimmerings of my situation dawned upon me. Then vividly came the recollection of all my dark, weary wanderings, but beyond these nothing, and I shuddered when I thought, until now, I had been lost even to myself.

The horse and rifle, I strangely enough argued, must be mine. "Else how came they with me?" Carefully, very carefully, I again examined them for some clue that might unravel this awful mystery that surrounded me. "Surely I had never seen them before." But then would come the maddening thought, "They must be mine, but I have forgotten them, as I have forgotten all besides, and I am lost, lost!"

I tried to recall some incident of my past life, but could not, only one place would come at my bidding, and one spot other than where I stood.

I felt I had other friends, but could not place them; knew other places that would not come out of the darkness in which they were hidden.

A little gleam of hope came when I thought, "I now know myself, perhaps this dark cloud will lift from my mind and let in the blessed light of remembrance."

"O, for a cool drink of water and a chance to bathe my burning head!" Again I scanned the plains, but upon that wide and lonely waste I saw no welcome gleam of water, no human form, only the heat waves dancing their weird, fantastic dances.

There might be some water among that distant group of hills. I would go in that direction.

In attempting to pick up my rifle I discovered that my right arm was useless. I could move it a little, but this caused a great pain. This was the first time that my attention had been called to my wounded arm. Perhaps up to this time my faculties had been too numb to notice the pain. With a handkerchief I managed to fasten the rifle to the saddle, then tried to mount, but a faintness seized me and I sank to the ground, a paralyzing numbness extending down the back of neck, through my right shoulder and chest.

I did not lose consciousness, but lay for some time unable to move or scarcely breathing. What tortures I endured while lying thus, no mortal tongue can tell. I was keenly alive to the great danger in which I was placed, the chief of which was that I might again lose myself. I had fallen face upwards and as I lay I could see the buzzard pass over me, turn, and passed again, each time looking glancingly down, and I fancied it mockingly echoed back the cry of hopeless and unutterable anguish that rang through all my soul—"Lost! lost!"

How long I remained in this condition I cannot tell, an eternity seemed to drag slowly by before I had sufficient strength to rise. The horse had wandered off a short distance and was feeding on the grass. I staggered to him and, resting my head on the saddle, tried to think, but an impenetrable veil had all beyond my wanderings. "O, how come I to be thus: from what friends and where had I wandered? What land was this, and where was my lost, lost world?"

I did not try to mount again for fear of that deadly faintness, but started off toward the hills leading the horse.

I could go but slowly and with great pain, for with the partial return of my memory came much bodily anguish. My breath came thick and short, perhaps in part owing to the fact that my tongue was so badly swollen that it nearly filled my mouth, and the sound of my breathing was like that of a dying man. At every step my head and neck seemed to open and shut with agonizing throbs, and, as if to add to my misery, that horrible bird, still wheeling in circles above me, followed as I went. Oh, with weary, stumbling steps towards the distant hills, the horse following patiently behind, and the bird above me, I felt, rather than knew, why this creature was following and the sight of it made me sick with despair.

Often I was forced to sit down and rest, but the sound of those wings softly fanning the air above me, would always urge me on, and when the bird in its awesome feeling crept over me, like that one feels when entering some dark and unknown place, and I would flinch from its shadow as from a blow. In this manner I went what seemed to be a long distance, the hills were still far off and I began to dread, for the first time, the approach of night, when, would horrors never end! I came across an object that froze the feeble current in my veins and brought the cold sweat to my brow. In the grass at my feet lay the skeleton of a man!

At any time to unexpectedly find the bones of a fellow creature bleaching on the plains, will startle the strongest and bravest, what then must have been my feelings, in that weak and shattered state to come thus suddenly face to face with such awful image of death?

I covered my eyes to shut out the sight, for in it I somehow read my doom; soon would my bones, like these, be whitening on the plains, and my fate, like this poor fellow's, be forever unknown.

Then a feeling, strange indeed, came over me. I thought these bones were mine, and I sorrowed over them like a mother for her dead child.

While standing by this solemn sight, the first clear recollection of God came to me, and beside those poor bones I knelt and prayed that this dark veil of forgetfulness might be lifted from my mind, but I could not divest myself of the weird feeling that somehow those bones were mine. I went on again, staggering from side to side like a drunken man, and over my senses stole a great wave of sorrow and self pity, for all was so terribly ghastly and strange!

I began to have a fear of myself, and would say, "If those bones are mine, what then am I but the damned and wandering phantom of my former self? Great God! is there no limit to misery? I suffered enough in that one thought to atone for the sins of countless years, so fraught was it with terror!"

At last I found a little lake, and, gathering all my strength for the effort, rushed panting to it.

This time it was no myth, and my lips touched the cool, clear water.

Never has water tasted to me as that did; the famed nectar of the gods could not have equaled it. But well it was for me that this water, cool as I thought it, must have been comparatively warm, for, lost as I was to so many things, I did not know the danger I ran from drinking so heartily. My thirst slaked, I bathed my head, and to ease the pain in the back of my neck, lay on my back in the shallow waters of the lake.

After a while, feeling somewhat relieved, I left my wet couch. Every detail of my fearful wanderings I could see plainly enough, but still no recollections beyond. I had thought the water restored my memory but it had not, and as if to crush the last lingerings of hope, there sat that hateful bird, but a few paces away, calmly preening its feathers, and stooping now and then to gaze on me with what seemed to be an air of horrible and ghastly proprietorship.

Never shall I cease hearing the wild despairing cry of utter anguish that was then torn from my very heart, for at the sight of this bird, for the time forgotten, had returned with overwhelming force that strange and irresistible power that would drive me on, and already I began to lose myself in the shadows that were fast closing me in!

I threw myself upon the ground, grasping the grass and tearing my hands into the earth in my mad, frantic efforts to hold myself there! I fought, I raved with fearful energy against this power that would rob me of myself and pour with giant force to drag me from the ground and hurl me blindly over the plains, I knew not where, save to death and darkness.

"O, merciful God!" I cried, "help me! or at least let me once more remember before madness and frenzy come to shut out what little light I have!"

I crawled on my hands and knees to the horse that was feeding near by. He seemed like some disconnected link between me and my lost world, his presence, a ray of sunshine where all besides is dark. The faithful brute rubbed his nose against me, and whined as if in pity at my wretched state. I lay by his side more dead than alive, for when this dread paroxysm had passed my fierce strength deserted me, leaving me weak as a child. Then the calmness of despair settled over me—that calmness which comes when hope is dead. My only wish now was that death might come before I would again lose myself, for of this I was fearful.

I watched with mournful interest the sun sink beneath the plains, perhaps for the last time that I would be conscious of his going down, for when he rose again I might be hopelessly mad, and as lost to myself as I now was to the rest of the world.

When the sun sank from sight that foul bird went away, though reluctant to leave me, but I felt that with the morning it would return and keep me in sight until the end.

Since reaching the lake the atmosphere had become very clear, the heat waves had stilled their dancing, and the misty curtains were folded away from the plains, while the hills that until now had been indistinct and hazy, stood out clearly against the sky. I was looking at them, now resolved into one huge mass, when, as if heaven's gates had suddenly opened, I sprang to my feet with a wild cry of joy and recognition. I knew that dark mass that stood out so boldly before me; that was Sentinel Butte!

"O, God! I thank thee! I thank thee!" With the first gleam of memory came the rest, like a glorious flood of light. I saw it all now, my leaving camp, the accident and my fearful experience since. My pent up feelings were let loose. I cried like a child, then laughed until I sank to the ground from exhaustion, and lay there laughing until my breath was gone, for oh, I had found all again, my lost world had returned. Now, I knew the horse, and rushed to caress him, like one who finds a long lost friend, but my wild action frightened him and he sped away across the plains, and in the ecstasy of my feelings I cheered him on, although I knew he was leaving me far behind in the darkness and solitude of night, but for that, I cared not, there was Sentinel Butte, blessed key to my deliverance! Just to the north and east, my camp must be off there to the southwest, some 20 miles away, I would get there, God helping me, though the horse was gone.

The great dipper has just come out and suddenly I thought of when I had last looked upon it. But now, with my mind clear, it seemed to lay my course, and I started slowly toward camp, and I was careful to husband my strength and sat down every few minutes to rest.

I had traveled thus about two hours, when the welcome sound of a gun reached my ears. It came from the direction I was going, and seemed to be about a mile distant. Had the horse not carried away the rifle I could have answered the shot. I shouted, but my voice was hoarse and weak. Then the happy thought struck me to set fire to some article of my clothing, and taking a handkerchief from about my neck, I set fire to it with a match and waved it above my head.

I was in despair lest they should not see it, for I knew they must be some of my men looking for me, but, then heaven, they did, as three shots fired in succession told me. Then I went on, hoping they would not pass me in the darkness. Soon the quick tramp of horses struck my ear, then the flash and report of a gun just ahead, I shouted and an answering shout came back, and the next moment four of my men rode up. "Saved at last!" and staggering toward them I fell in a dead faint.

When I opened my eyes I lay on my bed, and around me stood my men. Oh, but it was a joy to me, we remembered faces, and to hear the sound of a human voice again!

After I had taken a little nourishment they put me to bed and examined my injuries; my right arm and shoulder were very much bruised and swollen, but fortunately no bones were broken, but my neck gave me the most pain, and was so stiff I could only move my head as I moved my body; very nearly had my neck been broken.

Scarcely had my head touched the pillow before I sank into a deep sleep, nor did I awaken until late the next day. Then I told them what the reader already knows.

My non-appearance to the party on the day of the accident, had not occasioned any alarm, as they concluded I had been detained in camp, but when they returned home and learned from the cook that I had left quite early in the day to join them, fears were entertained that I might have met with some mishap, and search was instantly set on foot, and in fact had been kept up until the night of my rescue. It was on that night, as four of the men were returning from an unsuccessful search that my horse came galloping up to them with my rifle tied to the saddle; they fired off a gun and then rode back in the direction from which the horse had come, saw my signal, and found me as related, but before a word could be spoken by either party I had fallen senseless and apparently dead, as all efforts to rouse me were unavailing, so making a litter of their coats and two rifles, they placed me on it and carried me into camp where they finally succeeded in bringing me back to life.

When I was able to leave my bed and look to the glass, until now hidden from me, I did not know myself, so fearfully I was changed. They had prepared me for a change, but alas! who could prepare me for what I saw! My hair that but a few days before had been black as the raven's wing, now was as white as

snow; my eyes, deeply sunken, had in them a wild and troubled look, as though they were weary searching for something they could not find; my face and brow were seamed and wrinkled with lines of care, the weight of many years seemed to have suddenly settled down upon me, leaving me an aged and a broken man. The heart alone can know, for no tongue can tell the deep, unmeasured sorrow that I felt while gazing on this shattered wreck of what I once had been! Youth, strength and courage were gone forever, they died on yonder terror haunted plain!

Slowly some of my former strength returned, but not my courage, and I knew that from this on, I would never more dare to be alone, for if out an instant I found myself so, a host of fears, like hordes would assail me, and wrapt in such a host I would stand searching those dreary plains for that lost something, until the kindly touch of a hand, or the sound of a voice would call me back again.

It is years since these dread events occurred, but time has not lessened their horrors, for ever in my dreams, I kneel beside those bones, and hear the low wind sighing through the long grass waving over them, while, like the echo of a knell, sad, inexpressible sad, come the thoughts: "Here died my old self, for which, in vain I search among the shadows that have chased me in!"

DONALD MORAN.

(In a letter to the STANDARD a gentleman residing now in Idaho, says: "A word concerning this story might not be amiss. It is an incident that actually occurred to one of my men. It might seem that there could not possibly be any connection between the different parts of the story; for instance, the horse being with the man and he not aware of it; then finding the skeleton and thinking the bones were his. That he actually found a skeleton in his wanderings I can well believe, as but a short time after the accident happened we found the skeleton of a man in the country traveled by the lost man. It is still somewhat of a mystery to me how the horse and man came to be together, but I am sure that the horse may have followed him, but how about the rifle? It would not seem possible that he could have carried it all these miles and not been aware of it. And yet he might, for I have known a horse power that urged him on. Some years after this strange event happened the same man was with me on an expedition to the British lines. The man camp was some distance from us in the rear. This man, two others and myself were in advance looking over the country. One day I let him in camp alone, the cook going with me to prepare dinner. On my return in the evening I was much surprised and alarmed to find my friend firmly lashed to the center pole of the tent and apparently in the last stages of exhaustion. We unbound him and he soon recovered, but when interrogated as to his being bound maintained a dogged silence. However, when the men had retired he told me. It appears that soon after our departure in the morning the 'wild desire' mentioned in the story as occurring by the lake came upon him, and, try as he might, he could not shake it off. So strong did this fancy seize him that it was with the greatest difficulty he could restrain himself from rushing away across the plains with no fixed purpose or object in view. But, as he felt, he must, so in sheer desperation he bound himself to the tent pole, purposely trying to forget the combination of knots."

HE TOOK EVERYTHING.

The Farm, the Horse, the Little Boy, and the Widow.

From the Chicago Herald.

The old saying that the German farmer piles up greenbacks where the American sets out for the peachhouse is strikingly illustrated in Kankakee county, Ill. Fritz Loeb, an awkward youth, trudged into the county asking the price of 20 acres of land. Young Ed Bunch, having inherited a 100-acre farm, laughed at the little German.

"Twenty-acre farm! That wouldn't support a hen and her chickens."

"So?"

From Mr. Bunch he bought 20 acres and a small dwelling. Then he rolled up his sleeves. Driving daily to town, he became a span of boys, Mr. Bunch saw Fritz weeding the garden, cutting thistles, hoeing corn. Which the better farmer? The German's land yielded more an acre, his cows gave more milk, his hens laid more eggs. Money was made from the 20 acres than from the 40. Pretty Mrs. Bunch, glancing at the German's well filled pocketbook, said to him:

"You should marry."

"No one not have me."

"Some little Dutch girl might."

"So?"

Years rolled on. Fritz worked so late in the field that he milked the cows after dark. He wore his old blue coat until his skin was raw, and he never bought a new one, just for the appearance of the neighborhood. Mr. Bunch rode to town behind the span of boys. He now borrowed money from Fritz, mortgaging the farm and stock. Mr. Bunch died, the debts unpaid. The property, having for years decreased in value, must be sold, leaving little for the widow and her two boys, aged 10 and 12. Fritz said to her:

"Der little boys could drive cow and dig 'aters. Let dem live mit me."

She consented, and the boys, fond of Fritz, threw up their hats and turned somersaults in the air. A thunder storm in July drove Fritz from baying to the Bunch farmhouse. The widow, fearing the lightning, was glad to see him, giving him the best plush chair in the parlor, filling his high top boots with the smoke curled up over his head he said:

"Der farm vhas mine?"

"Yes, Fritz."

"Der span of bays vhas mine?"

"Yes, Fritz."

"Der little boys vhas mine?"

"Yes, Fritz."

"I no likes to leave noddings. Vhas der velder mine?"

She looked out through a window at the rainbow arching the retreating storm cloud, and she answered in a low voice:

"Yes, Fritz."

At 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon they drove to the parsonage behind the span of boys.

MODERN SCRIPTURES.

From the Ram's Horn.

The devil hates the man who minds his own business.

A woman can be more dangerous on a bicycle than when she throws at hens.

The man who finds the most fault with the preacher is the one who does the least to support him.

The man who undertakes to get rich at the expense of his conscience will find that he can't do it.

The devil loves to hear the man who won't pay his debts talk in church.

The man who owns a railroad never gets half as much joy out of it as the one who travels on a free pass.

There are women who sometimes think on Sunday that they have religion, but when the clothes line breaks down on Monday they find out that they haven't.

The tomato is a native of South America. It was known in England as early as 1586, but its introduction into North America is credited to the French families who were exiled by the revolutionists of San Domingo and settled in the eastern part of the United States.

## QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

It was once believed that hares changed their sex every year.

A fish with two tails is the leading curiosity at Madison, Ga. It is alive and doing well.

Africa is now completely encircled by submarine cables, which make up altogether a length of 17,000 miles.

Chicago's postoffice is credited with doing more registered letters business than any other postoffice in the union.

Dr. Luderus says that coffee acts as a germicide and destroys the bacilli of cholera, anthrax and typhus in a few hours.

In the city of St. Petersburg it begins to freeze at nine and 10 o'clock, and, natural that rarely takes place before the beginning of April.

The man who invented metal plates for the heels and soles of shoes worn on the feet on rough shoes is said to have realized \$250,000 in ten years.

Trains on the Brooklyn bridge make faster time, by two miles an hour, than did the first railway trains that ran between New York and Albany.

According to the most recent census returns London has a population of 6,202,000, Paris of 2,450,000, Berlin of 1,574,465 and St. Petersburg of 1,000,000.

Two human skeletons of giant size were unearthed Thursday at Lakewood, N. Y., by workmen engaged in grading. The thigh bone of one was 30 inches long.

Newington, Conn., poultry raisers are having a hard time of it. Foxes are unusually abundant, and they are eating chickens as they are hatched.

Two gum trees which tower over 100 feet above a little church in Guatemala, are 60 feet in circumference, and their strong roots have pushed the foundation of the church into the dust.

An unusually large number of bears are noticed this summer in the neighborhood of St. Petersburg. This, according to the experience of old peasants, prognosticates the coming of a severe winter.

The apparent flattening of the vault of the heavens has been found to have an annual period, and to depend on clouds. It seems least flat with a misty horizon, and less by night than by day.

The most extensive camphor raiser in Formosa, the beautiful island where that precious gum is grown in large quantities, is named "Camphor King," and is called in the